

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD
Meeting Report
July 17, 2003

Member	Affiliation	Attended	
		Yes	No
Thomas Collins (Chair)	OLIS-RI Department of Administration	X	
Stephen Alves	RI Senate		X
Alice Barrows	Library Board of Rhode Island	X	
James Berard	RI Department of Corrections	X	
Gary Ciminero	RI House of Representatives—Policy Office	X	
Maggie Dziadkiewicz	Office of Higher Education	X	
Nicholas Leporacci	RI Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals		X
Janet Levesque	RI League of Cities and Towns	X	
Raymond McKay	City of Warwick		X
Peter McWalters	RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education		X
Dexter Merry	Public Telecommunications Authority		X
James R. Monti, Jr.	West Warwick School District		X
Thomas Mullaney	Budget Office-RI Department of Administration	X	
Marvin Perry	RI Department of Labor and Training	X	
Christopher Wessells	University of Rhode Island	X	
James Willis	Secretary of State's Office		X
Don Wolfe	Member-at-Large	X	
William Wray	Citizens Financial Group	X	

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Pam Annarummo	RI Department of Environmental Management
Howard Boksenbaum	OLIS-RI Department of Administration
Robert Childs	RI Department of Health
Carol Ciotola	OLIS-RI Department of Administration
George Loftus	OSHEAN
Beth Perry	OLIS-RI Department of Administration
Celine Rice	OSHEAN
Phil Silva	Fiscal Fitness Program
Mark Treat	Fiscal Fitness Program
Thomas Viall	New England Interactive (NEI)

Action Items—

- (1) Mr. Loftus will provide Mr. Collins with an electronic copy of his PowerPoint presentation on OSHEAN.
- (2) A Draft Annual Report will be presented to the Board for review at the August 21 meeting.
- (3) Mr. Collins will visit URI's data centers.
- (4) Mr. Collins invited members to present ideas at the next Board meeting on how best to move forward with respect to its work.

Chair's Report—After members introduced themselves, Mr. Collins:

- Introduced George Loftus from the Ocean State Higher Education Economic Development and Administrative Network (OSHEAN).

- Spoke about his activities since becoming the Chief Information Officer and noted the importance of the Fiscal Fitness Program's work, which has created a lot of momentum. He believes that he will find opportunities for information technology that could be applied to assist the state.
- Announced that *Rhode Island Monthly Magazine* presented its "Best Summer Reading Program" award to the Office of Library and Information Services—Library Programs.
- Informed the Board that a member of the OLIS—Library Programs staff, Joyce Mathews, was recently killed in a car accident. Ms. Mathews provided services to the blind and handicapped in the state.

June 19, 2003, Meeting Report—Mr. Wolfe moved to approve the June 19, 2003, Meeting Report. Mr. Ciminero seconded the motion, and the report was unanimously approved.

Presentation: OSHEAN—Mr. Loftus provided an overview of OSHEAN via a PowerPoint presentation and additional information on its Beacon Project (handout). Based on his overview, the following comments/questions were presented:

- Mr. Collins asked about restrictions with respect to this network. Mr. Loftus replied that anyone involved in Government work could access OSHEAN. Though there are some restrictions with respect to the use of Internet II, there are none with respect to OSHEAN itself. Mr. Collins noted OSHEAN's tremendous progress and requested an electronic copy of Mr. Loftus' PowerPoint presentation, which he will provide.

Draft Annual Report—Mr. Collins informed members that this draft would be ready for review at the Board's August meeting. In writing this draft, Mr. Collins asked Mr. Boksenbaum to be frank with respect to the information technology activities within the state. Several issues of need have been included, and additional ones may be added or presented in a cover memo. In addition to the Governor and the Leadership of the General Assembly, department directors will also receive copies of the report.

Portal Review Committee (PRC) Report—The General Manager's Report was distributed for Board members' information. Mr. Boksenbaum reported that: (1) Mr. Collins was introduced at PRC's July 15 meeting. (2) With Mr. Treat's assistance, actions were taken to move the portal from its "on-hold" position to a process for proposals that will provide a new level of accountability. RI.gov will provide estimates of time and cost for each of the projects currently in the pipeline in order to proceed with this work. (3) RI.gov reformatted the information side of the portal into a database-driven system.

- Mr. Collins complimented Messrs. Treat and Wray for their efforts to forge a new relationship between the State and New England Interactive (NEI) to insure that the State gets its fair share of the revenues generated.

Communications Working Group (CWG) Report—Mr. Boksenbaum said that this Group met earlier in the day. He reported that: (1) Memorandums of Agreement were being signed so that 800 MHz digital radios could be installed statewide at first-responder sites in order to communicate with each other. Installation should be completed in September. (2) Mr. Boucher of RCC Consultants is preparing a state communications plan. In this regard, he is conducting interviews with those in the radio communications community. (3) A \$6 million grant to fund a communications project is being managed primarily through the Governor's Office. Tim Brown of the Governor's Policy Office, Brian Glancy of the State Police, and Walter Casper of OLIS-IT are serving as representatives to develop the grant proposal and to insure that this proposal and the consultant's study result in a coherent, interoperable statewide network. (4) A \$6 million grant opportunity has also been presented to the Providence Metropolitan area. Because matching funds are required, the CWG is waiting to see how that grant application develops. (5) The Department of Health learned of leftover grant money that could be applied to the radio communications network. Discussions will take place to determine the best use for these funds. (6) The Department of Health awarded the RINET-MUNI contract to allow

for the interconnection of municipalities with RINET's network, which runs parallel to the K-12 network. The Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns will handle the marketing of this network to the municipalities. The Secretary of State's Office also plans to participate on RINET's network to support its mandate to provide a central voter registration to all municipalities. Grant money has been provided to fund this network for the first year. The Department of Health will meet with others to identify various streams of additional federal funding that could be used to support this municipal piece of the network for the long-term.

Old Business—Mr. Collins commented on the following projects:

RI-SAIL—Identified as a high priority, he has met with those involved in the process to learn its background and to understand its current status. He will report to Director Higgins by September with a report on how best to move forward with this project.

Information Technology Operations Center (ITOC), in Johnston—This 25-plus year old facility is in dire need of physical rehabilitation. While fulfilling its mission, there is no disaster recovery plan in place. A study by a Newport consortium two years ago presented a \$2.6 million plan to make improvements to the ITOC at its existing site. A review by the Fiscal Fitness Program has identified several options, one of which would be to move it to another site within the state. Outsourcing some or all of the activities is also being analyzed. He stated that the Fiscal Fitness Program is inventorying all State data centers to develop an integrated set of requirements for hosting all computers and servers that could be managed at the ITOC.

At Mr. Collins' request, Mr. Treat provided a brief status report on the Fiscal Fitness Program's next phase of operation, including the status of its Information Technology study. Mr. Treat stated that 19 different computer rooms/data centers are state-operated. Though the complete number of systems is not yet confirmed, it is estimated to be well over 100. There are 275-280 state employees performing information technology tasks throughout the Executive Branch—75 represent OLIS-IT staff. Fiscal Fitness Program staff are looking towards server and e-mail consolidations and leveraging platforms among different agencies. A unified disaster recovery plan with respect to the ITOC facility issue is about to begin. The first two steps undertaken by the Fiscal Fitness Program entailed data gathering and interviews. The next step will be to refine some of those ideas and to provide cost benefit analyses for them.

- Mr. Wessells noted that the University of Rhode Island is considering the consolidation of its two computer centers. He invited Mr. Collins to view these centers and to discuss the possibility of using the University as a backup or hot site for some of its functions. Mr. Collins accepted his invitation. Mr. Wessells will coordinate arrangements for this visit.

New Business—Mr. Collins spoke about the roles and origins of this Board, and the functions as envisioned in the enabling legislation. (Copies of the legislation were distributed.) His highest priority for the Board in the coming year will be to develop a means to fulfill its roles and responsibilities. He referred to several sections of the legislation, including policy, definitions and the Board's roles and duties. He commented on the need to focus more on the Executive Branch entities than was previously done. The definitions are fairly broad, which will enable this Board to do its work across the state. He suggested developing a policy subcommittee to review, collect, present and recommend policies. A five-year plan was prepared in the past, but it does not represent the breath and scope envisioned by the legislation. He stressed the importance of five-year plans and as a first step, suggested requesting that all agencies develop them for submittal to the IRMB. A planning forum may be necessary to review these plans. They could be presented to the Board on a quarterly basis to inform them of information technology activities within the various agencies.

- Mr. Childs pointed out that a business plan would also need to be in place, so that technology is not driving the information technology plan. The Department of Health is preparing a new strategy to

develop an information systems plan. Mr. Collins concurred that information technology needs to be in alignment with business goals and objectives. As a starting point, he suggested that the Board recap its vision, mission and strategy goals, and then determine how the goals would be supported by information technology.

Mr. Collins distributed and reviewed an architecture framework, including a definition of information technology architecture, objectives of architecture and how it is used to guide information technology assets.

- Mr. Berard said that the Department of Corrections (DOC) consistently spends a considerable amount of time researching software/hardware before purchasing, with an eye towards using off-the-shelf products. He confirmed for Mr. Collins that the software purchased would run on the existing infrastructure, adding that DOC's infrastructure must work on multiple networks.
- Mr. Perry commented on the information technology systems used at the Department of Labor and Training (DLT) which widely vary as a result of mergers that occurred with other state departments. Though the same platform is interchangeable throughout the organization, equipment varies considerably from office to office. He noted, too, that in some instances DLT must interact with national systems that are governed by national laws. DLT staff serve on national organizations, including an information technology committee, in an attempt to develop state consortiums to take advantage of grant opportunities. Mr. Berard said that DOC has the same types of relationships for like purposes. Mr. Collins noted the advantages in having those types of relationships with other states.
- Mr. Wessells noted that universities must cater to end-users' needs, which results in housing various operating systems. Mr. Collins noted the need for a broad architecture to allow diverse systems to interconnect. Mr. Wessells stated that URI has standards based on Internet protocol, but these change quickly. There is currently a shift to wireless computing, but the security parameters and standards involved are not well defined. Mr. Collins said that one of the objectives of an enterprise architecture review is to spot challenges. The National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) has an architecture planning tool kit that is formidable.
- With respect to the section of the Board's enabling legislation that speaks to promoting executive level awareness, Ms. Annarummo noted that it is an important topic for the Director of the Department of Environmental Management. Mr. Collins noted that there are opportunities to improve executive level awareness, especially with respect to the valuable contributions that can be made to organizations.
- Mr. Berman spoke of his frustrations in dealing with the purchasing process though DOC has a five-year plan in place. Mr. Collins pointed out that purchasing and budgeting are key areas with respect to a five-year plan. Though he has not yet dealt with the Legislature, he felt that having agencies pursuing goals and presenting how the goals were decided, together with next steps in the proposal process, would build institutional memory and knowledge. Organizations with common goals probably also have similar problems. If there were open communications and coordination among agencies, problems could be shared; and there could be a shared development of various computer applications. Identifying compatibility and consistency among agencies may provide for strong collaborative efforts with OSHEAN to promote and advance the state's higher education institutions with respect to technology projects that might benefit the state. He suggested holding a Rhode Island information technology workshop or forum. State and municipal IT professionals could be invited to attend a series of presentations dealing with issues such as privacy and homeland security. He plans to work with this Board to track additional people to work on subcommittees. He explained that providing for a multi-year funding capability to tackle certain projects and to insure that adequate resources to finish those projects are available present a significant challenge. He invited members to present their ideas at the next Board meeting on how best to move forward with this work.

Mr. Collins presented an example of how shared efforts among agencies could work. He spoke about the legislation that mandated the Secretary of State to implement “Business Fast Start,” which provides one-stop shopping for businesses that need to obtain multiple permits and licenses. The process begins with residents filling out a master form online. The implication of this action will affect the Department of Health and the Department of Administration’s Division of Taxation. As the state moves forward to regulate agencies that have shared needs, this process could evolve into a completely electronic process allowing residents to obtain the status of applications as they move through the approval process. Standards would be needed for document management and workflow management to allow for this type of follow up online. This Board must work towards a common consistent technology and must also work to secure funds necessary to build such a system without having to do so in pieces. This will be difficult to achieve, but projects like “Business Fast Start” bring issues to the surface. He cited Jim Willis as the driving force behind this project, and he will follow up with him to communicate some of the implications involved.

- Noting that at the July 15 Portal Review Committee meeting Mr. Collins had questioned what was envisioned by those that drafted the legislation to create “Business Fast Start, Mr. Ciminero provided copies of the project’s Press Release and the legislation enacted.
- Mr. Ciminero noted that since the Board’s enabling legislation was drafted in 1996, views can change. He suggested that the five-year plan be changed to a three-year plan; other changes to the legislation may be necessary as well.
- Mr. Ciminero commented on how the Board would be affected once the separation of powers bill is enacted, since legislators would no longer be allowed membership to the Board.

For the next meeting, Mr. Collins stated that he would move forward with plans to build the subcommittees, bringing in additional people to begin work on the issues that need to be addressed.

Next Meeting—Thursday, August 21, 2003, at 3 p.m. at the Department of Administration Building—Conference Room “B,” in Providence.